

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

a reconciling in Christ congregation

The Eagle

May 2024

New Series Volume MMXXIV – No. 5, 2024

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Director of Music: Jessica Madow

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From the Pastor—May, 2023

Henri Bergson was a French philosopher who died in 1941. Outside professional philosophical circles, he is today mostly remembered for a concept he termed, in French, the *elan vital*, the “vital force.” Deeply influenced by the evolutionary science of his day, Bergson posited his *elan vital* as key to understanding the development of life from simple to complex organisms. Bergson also recognized that such development is not inevitable; especially in human development, the “vital force” can be stymied, particularly by rigid social conventions that suppress human creativity.

This understanding of life’s journey is reflected in an essay that Bergson titled simply “Laughter.” Bergson theorized that laughter is one mechanism by which the “vital force” undermines the constraints of social rigidity and opens the door for human life to take new shapes, and in effect, become more alive. Or to quote the philosopher Jimmy Buffett, “If we couldn’t laugh, we’d all go insane.” Laughter is a powerful force for subverting what blocks the flow of life and often locks us into life-denying social structures. Why do we laugh when the pompous know-it-all gets shown up by the whipsmart kid? Why do we laugh when the hoity-toity fashion model trips on the hem of her designer dress? Why do we still laugh at the Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, and Charlie Chaplin?

I’m no philosopher, to which I’m sure both Bergson and Buffett would agree. I do, however, have some acquaintance with the Holy Spirit, and I don’t think I’m going too far out on a limb in likening the Holy Spirit as God’s *elan vital*. The Holy Spirit is, more accurately, God the constant creator, God who is constantly creating and re-creating, God whose will is new creation, the first fruits of which is the Risen Christ. (Here’s a good time to say, “Amen!”) But in the phenomenon we call sin, we also know that the Holy Spirit’s constant work of fulfilling life is constantly resisted.



It's not just that humans resist change, but more to the point, we fight tooth and nail not to be changed. Since we know that laughter is especially effective at exposing our foolishness, is it too far-fetched to suggest that God has a sense of humor?

If you go to a bookstore to buy a Bible, "God's Book," you're not going to find it in the humor section, but that's not to say that the Bible is devoid of laughter. You may recall that when Sarah overheard the three angels telling Abraham that she will conceive and bear a son, she laughed, saying, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?" (Genesis 18:12). The child of that unlikely union was, you may recall, named Isaac, which is Hebrew for "He laughs/will laugh." When around the campfire Jacob's descendants told the story of how their forebear woke up with Leah instead of Rachel (Genesis 18:25), I'm pretty sure that got a big laugh. The Book of Jonah is not about whether a man can survive three days in a whale, but that God has to use a whale to get a prophet to deliver God's Word, following which the prophet wants to die because God's Word was fulfilled. Funny, yes? The parables of Jesus, likewise, have all sorts of twists and turns that mean to pull the rug out from under people who thought they had God all figured out.

God's Word is serious, but not deadly so. Jesus is without question, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and where there's life, there's laughter.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Mike

HA HA HA!

**Want to come to church,
but don't have a ride?
Call Carol Faulkner,
she will help arrange
transportation . . .**

610-559-5576



The Church Office will be closed . . .

Monday, May 27th, for the
Memorial Day Holiday

Dear God, We thank you for the brave men and women who have fought, and continue to fight, so courageously for our nation. We ask for your covering and blessing over them and their families. We pray that you would be gracious and encircle them with your peace. We pray for your great favor and goodness to be evident in their lives.

The Gallery at St. John's presents . . .



*The works of Mary Button
Open Sunday's through June 2nd*

12:00 - 3:00 pm

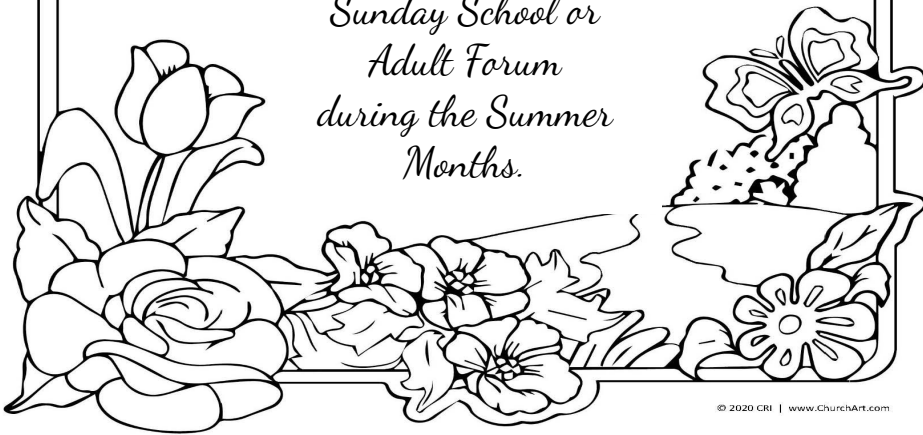
*Mary is a teacher, writer, designer, speaker,
illustrator and daughter of Pastor Mike and
Carolyn Button. Come see the liturgical and
devotional art she creates and get inspired.*

Summer Worship

June, July, & August

Worship times will change to
9:30 am

There will also be NO
Sunday School or
Adult Forum
during the Summer
Months.



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For Your Information: The church council at St. John's has approved the use of the Chapel on a trial basis to the Solo Las Escriuras Congregation beginning May 5th, 2024. Solo Las Escriuras has been looking for a space to worship and we are happy to help. They will be meeting Sundays from 2-4:00 pm, and will also have use of the Hospitality Room and Nursery. We welcome them !!



May ~ 10:30 am Worship

Altar Guild: Joyce Petty / Connie Garr
Counters: Phyllis Schurz / Wayne Docker

May 5

Sixth Sunday of Easter

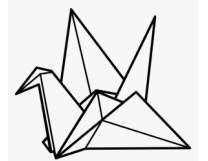
Liturgical Color: White
Reading: John 15:9-17
Reader: Bob Black
Worship Assistant: Jim Heck
Comm. Asst. / Usher: Nancy Ducey / Connie Garr
Camera Team: Brad Thomas

May 12

Ascension of Our Lord

Liturgical Color: White
Reading: Luke 24:44-53
Reader: Charles Lewis
Worship Assistant: Joyce Petty
Comm. Asst. / Usher: Nancy Ducey / Connie Garr
Camera Team: Bill Iacovone

Did you know . . . Early Ascension Day rituals sometimes included the consumption of fowl to remind Christians that Jesus ascended, or "flew," into heaven.



May 19

Day of Pentecost

Liturgical Color: Red
Reading: John 15:26-27; 16:4-15
Reader: Karla Lake
Worship Assistant: Steve Moyer
Comm. Asst. / Usher: Nancy Ducey / Connie Garr
Camera Team: Pete Lake

Did you know . . .

Pastors will wear red vestments on Pentecost, symbolic of the burning fire of God's love and the tongues of fire that descended on the apostles.

However, in some parts of the world, Pentecost is also referred to as "White Sunday, referring to the white vestments that are typically worn in Britain and Ireland.

An Italian Pentecost tradition is to scatter rose leaves from the ceiling of the churches to recall the miracle of the fiery tongues.

In France, it is tradition to blow trumpets to recall the sound of the driving wind of the Holy Spirit.

In Asia, it is typical to have an extra service, during which long poems and prayers are recited.

In Russia, church-goers often carry flowers or green branches during Pentecost services.



May 26

Holy Trinity Sunday

Liturgical Color: White
 Reading: John 3:1-17
 Reader: Charles Hanson
 Worship Assistant: Chris Orem
 Comm. Asst. /Usher: / Connie Garr
 Camera Team: Dave Faulkner



Did you know . . . The Holy Trinity is one of the greatest mysteries of faith. The Trinity refers to the idea that God is one, but can be experienced in three different Persons.

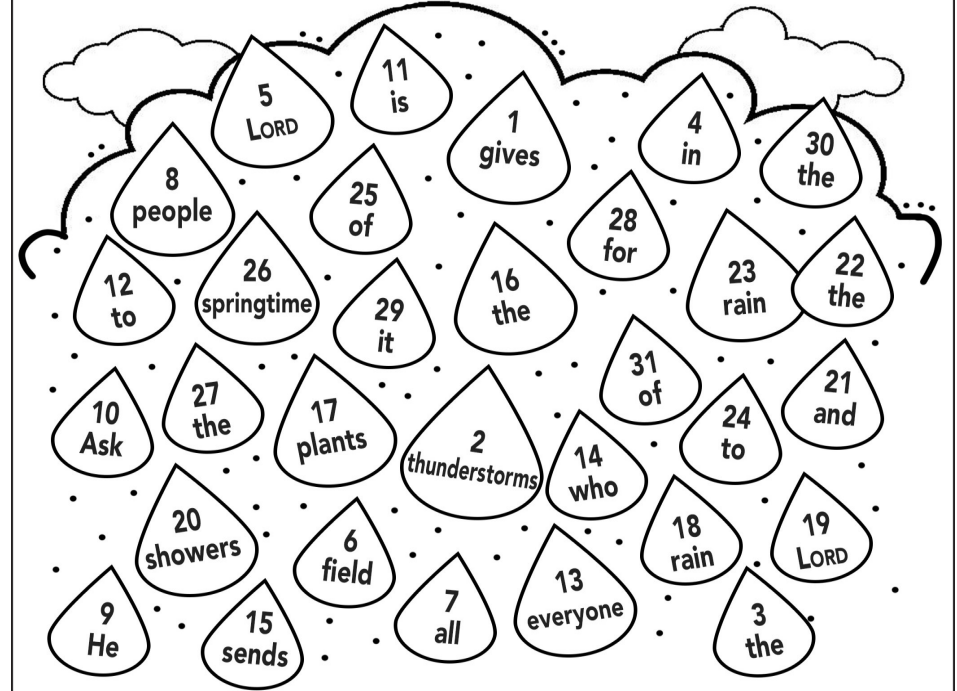
The word 'trinity' comes from the word 'tri' meaning 'three' and 'unity' meaning 'one'.

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.
Sunday School / Adult Forum: Sundays 9:00 am Worship: Sundays 10:30	Al-Anon Wednesdays 10:00 am Fellowship Hall	NA Thursdays 7:30 pm Fellowship Hall	1
5 Following Worship: Finance <hr/> Gallery Open 12-3:00 pm	6 Choir Rehearsal -1:00 pm	7 Bible Study— Hospitality Room 10:00 am	8 Prayer - Hos Re 11:0 <hr/> Council D
12 Mother's Day Following Worship: Membership <hr/> Gallery Open 12-3:00 pm	13 Choir Rehearsal -1:00 pm Council Meeting—Chapel	14 Bible Study— Hospitality Room 10:00 am	15
19 Pentecost Following Worship: Property <hr/> Gallery Open 12-3:00 pm	20 Choir Rehearsal -1:00 pm	21 Bible Study— Hospitality Room 10:00 am	22 Prayer - Hos Re 11:0
26 Holy Trinity Following Worship: Rachel's Circle <hr/> Gallery Open 12-3:00 pm	27 Church Office Closed	28 Bible Study— Hospitality Room 10:00 am	29

Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
	2	3	4
Prayer Group Hospitality Room 10:00 am	9	10	11 Archives 10-12:00 pm
Financial Reports Due	16	17 Newsletter Deadline	18
Prayer Group Hospitality Room 10:00 am	23	24 Newsletter Folding	25
	30	31	

Puzzle! Puzzle! Puzzle!

Complete a Bible verse about spring by writing the word from each raindrop on the correct numbered line below.



_____ 10 _____ 16 _____ 5 _____ 28 _____ 18

_____ 4 _____ 22 _____ 26 _____ ;

_____ 29 _____ 11 _____ 3 _____ 19 _____ 14 _____ 15

_____ 27 _____ 2 _____ .

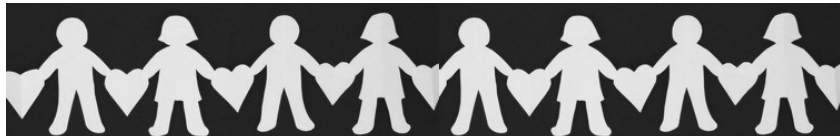
_____ 9 _____ 1 _____ 20 _____ 31 _____ 23

_____ 12 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 21 _____ 17 _____ 25

_____ 30 _____ 6 _____ 24 _____ 13

Zechariah 10:1, NIV

Answer: Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime; it is the LORD who sends the thunderstorms. He gives showers of rain to all people, and plants of the field to everyone. Zechariah 10:1, NIV



Adult Forum:

“Letter of Love: A Study of 1 John”

Join us –Sundays at
9:00 am in the Gallery

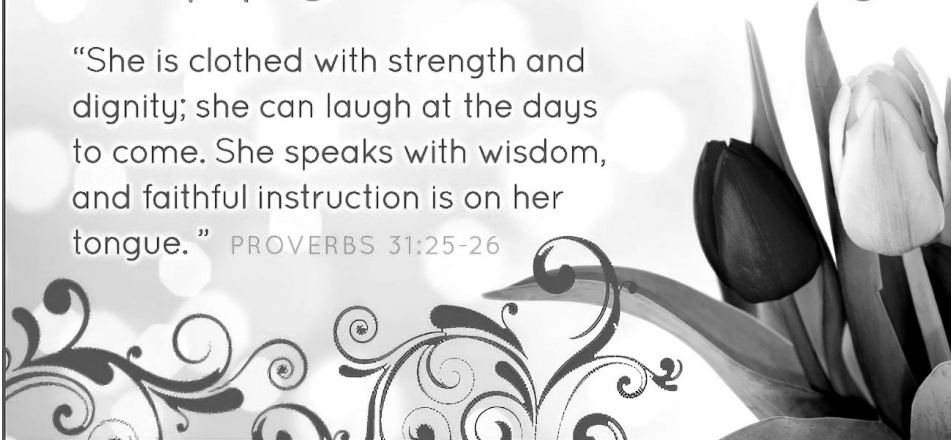
Join Us— Ages 3-UP
Sunday School,
Sundays @ 9:00 am



**Last Day of Sunday School / Adult Forum
for the Summer is: May 26th, 2024
See you in September . . .**

Happy Mother’s Day

“She is clothed with strength and
dignity; she can laugh at the days
to come. She speaks with wisdom,
and faithful instruction is on her
tongue.” PROVERBS 31:25-26



Celebrate

Anniversaries

- 5/2—Barbara & Charles Hanson
- 5/4—Ruth & Brad Thomas
- 5/22—Tika & Daniel Cressman
- 5/23—William & Mary Iacovone

Birthdays

- 5/4—Charles Orem
- 5/5—Sue Glenn
- 5/16—Larry Transue
- 5/17—Bob Seiple
- 5/18—Pete Lake
- 5/18—Scarlett Weber
- 5/19—Louise Nuttall
- 5/20—William Keyser
- 5/20—Ruth Thomas
- 5/21 –Cortney Luce
- 5/23—Robert Aerni

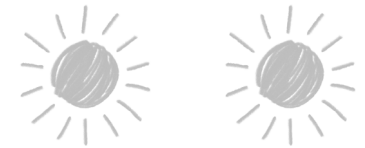


*May God smile down on
you each day . . .
And may faith and hope lift
you up always!*

I believe with all my heart that our
prayers are heard, and that God
graces our lives with as much hope
and love and comfort as our
hearts can hold. I wish you the
joy and serenity that come from
every whispered prayer, and I
know that . . . in God’s plans . . .
there are so many beautiful days
just waiting to shine their light
on you!

Join us . . .

Prayer Group, 2nd & 4th
Wednesday of the month
at 11:00 am
In the Hospitality Room.



Prayer Concerns:

Chuck, Deanna, Pam,
James, Kara, Christine,
Donald, Janice, Maria, Matt,
Tammy, Carolyn, Julia,
Charles, Rita, Donald, Terry,
Jim, Shirley, Madelyn, Jeff,
Carol, Bill, Caitlin, Mike,
Sarah, Arlene, Our
Homebound Family and The
St. John’s Call Committee

Lutheran Disaster Response

Your gifts make it possible to provide fast and effective support to communities in need, whenever and wherever a disaster may strike.

Make an online donation:

<https://community.elca.org/lutherandisasterresponse>

Give a monthly gift:

Become a monthly partner and give automatic, monthly gifts in support of Lutheran Disaster Response.

Mail your donation:

Make checks payable to Lutheran Disaster Response (if designated to a specific disaster, please indicate in the memo line).

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
ELCA Gift Processing Center
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

Put your donations in the offering plate:
Please mark "Lutheran Disaster Relief"



May Fellowship Hour:

The Spiritual Life Committee

-Committees are responsible for providing, setting up and cleaning up at the end of fellowship.



Order your Red Geraniums for Pentecost...

Red geraniums hold special significance during the Feast of Pentecost, which is traditionally celebrated 50 days after Easter. The vibrant red petals of geraniums symbolize the tongues of fire that descended upon the apostles during the first Pentecost.

Honor or Memorialize a loved one in honor of Pentecost...

Plant Cost: \$8.00 (Deadline 5/10/24)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

In Memory / Honor / Other: _____

Amount Paid: _____

- May Benevolence, Safe Harbor -

Spring is a time for new beginnings and the residents of Safe Harbor of Easton sure do know about fresh starts and new beginnings.

Safe Harbor of Easton provides shelter and basic needs for those experiencing homelessness, and it all began at St. John's! In 1983 the Easton Drop-In Center started a day program which was located in St. John's social hall for low-income residents and those living on the streets. It provided meals, socialization and advocacy. Outgrowing the space at St. John's, in 1990 the day program was moved to a renovated building on N. Bushkill Drive in Easton with the Salvation Army providing overnight shelter for adult men and women. In 1993 the two programs merged, eventually forming Safe Harbor of Easton, supporting itself from government grants and the community.

At Safe Harbor the focus is on identifying and changing the root causes of each person's homelessness. These include mental, behavioral and financial health issues. Individualized in-house case management, classes and a therapeutic and supportive community help the residents to thrive, grow, trust and take responsibility for their actions and eventual self-sufficiency. Life and character skills, employment skills, job searches, budgeting and finance, coping skills and behavioral change education are just some of the things addressed. Advocacy and help with applying for eligible benefits and housing programs are provided. Coordination with mental health and substance use treatment provide continuity. Goals are set and achieved!

The community can help by signing up to provide a meal, or dropping off donations of clothes, toiletries, non-perishable food, new underwear and socks, cleaning supplies and unused bedding. Check out their Amazon Wish List as well.

Monetary donations can be made online or checks mailed to:

Safe Harbor Easton, 536 Bushkill Drive, Easton, Pa. 18042.

Tell others about the wonderful work done at Safe Harbor!



ST JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

330 FERRY STREET

EASTON PA 18042-4539

610-258-6119

(ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED)

NON-PROFIT

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

EASTON PA

PERMIT #310



**Make a joyful noise
unto God, all ye lands.**

Psalm 66:1, KJV